

## **Post-Event Summary Report**

**Name of Event:** Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging  
White House Conference on Aging Regional Forums –  
An Independent Aging Event of the 2005 White House Conference on  
Aging

**Date of Event:** Willmar, MN – March 31, 2005 – 27 participants  
North Mankato, MN – April 4, 2005 – 36 participants  
Montevideo, MN – April 6, 2005 – 20 participants  
Marshall, MN – April 7 – 14 participants

**Location of Event:** See above  
(Include city and state)

**Number of Persons attending:** See above for breakdown – Total participation - 97

**Sponsoring Organization(s):** Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging

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Please follow this format for each priority area, with the most important listed first.  
**Please ensure that your organization's name and contact information is provided at the bottom of each page submitted.**

**Priority Issue #1:** (describe specific issue) **PLANNING ALONG THE LIFESPAN - SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM**

**Barriers:** (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

- Social Security Reform is too political. The current information available on Social Security is conflicting.
- Lack of information on how privatization would work.
- Lack of information about success of privatization in other countries.
- Survivor and disability benefits available through Social Security are important and must be maintained; potential for these benefits to be at risk during Social Security Reform.
- Not knowing what will happen to the Baby Boomers at retirement age.
- Government borrows from Social Security reserves and/or interest or uses general revenues to fund Social Security.

**Proposed Solution(s):** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

- Look at Social Security Reform as “change” rather than “reform.”
- Social Security is the only source of income for some recipients, therefore Social Security needs to survive.
- Continued solvency and stability of Social Security is needed.
- Raise the tax cap on Social Security.
- Get non-biased information on Social Security out to the public and then make changes.
- Gradually increase the retirement age.
- Take a close look at survivor and disability benefits, protect them and ensure that they remain.
- Consider funding survivor and disability benefits in some other way.
- Adjust Social Security tax according to income i.e. the more income, the more tax you pay.
- Raise the salary tax cap so that the wealthy are paying more into Social Security.
- Consider a cap on the wealthy as recipients of Social Security i.e. if income is above a certain level, then they are not eligible for Social Security benefits.
- Strengthen Social Security for our children and grandchildren.
- Privatization/investing could be a positive learning experience.
- If there is a move to privatization, do it carefully and gradually.
- Maintain the cost of living adjustments.
- Review what other countries have done with privatization and learn from them. Use experiences from other countries as a model for the United States.
- Have a neutral person/group conduct the review of Social Security and make recommendations.
- Medicare improvement or reform is as important or more important than Social Security Reform.
- Social Security Reform has occurred in the past and we have survived it. We can survive it again.

**Priority Issue #2:** (describe specific issue) **HEALTH AND LONG TERM LIVING - CONSUMER DIRECTED COMMUNITY SUPPORTS (CDCS)**

**Barriers:** (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

- CDCS is difficult to understand and confusing.
- CDCS may lead to vulnerability of recipient and could be a safety issue.
- Not knowing all of the liability issues of CDCS. CDCS needs to be monitored.
- There is a possibility that money will leave our area if consumers participate in CDCS.

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- Consumer not being knowledgeable of CDCS.
- Lack of education on CDCS.
- There may be social conflict when a family member being paid for what might be considered a moral obligation.
- CDCS puts more pressure on family members.
- CDCS opens the door for fraud.
- CDCS staff providing services not being licensed.

**Proposed Solution(s):** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

- Educate the public/provide more outreach on CDCS. The public needs to know that CDCS:
  - provides choice
  - is consumer driven
  - allows the consumer to maintain autonomy
  - keeps cost low
  - involves and strengthens the family
  - provides an option for intergenerational interaction
  - delays a move to nursing home
  - encourages consumer to stay in their own home longer
  - allows culture and traditions to be respected
  - is a financial benefit to caregivers and
  - gives the consumer the option of hiring someone they know
- Start slow and monitor CDCS carefully.
- Include faith communities and volunteers in CDCS.
- Require criminal background checks on CDCS service providers.
- Have built-in safeguards for CDCS.
- Protect vulnerable adults who utilize CDCS.
- Continue to give decision making back to consumer along with their dignity through utilization of CDCS.
- Continue to allow family to help family through CDCS.
- Set up support groups for CDCS recipients/caregivers/service providers.
- Set up a system of evaluation to monitor CDCS and then adjust as needed.
- Not ready for CDCS, postpone and/or cancel it.